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(71) Applicant
BKL Extrusions Limited (United Kingdom),
Birmingham Factory Centre, Kings Norton, Birmingham

(72) Inventors
Colin Martin White,
John Thomas Rogers

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service
B. C. Robertson, B. Thorpe, G. M. Dodd, P. Hillier,
Guest Keen and Nettlefolds plc., Group Patents &
Licensing Dept., PO Box 55, Ipsley House,
Ipsley Church Lane, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 0TL

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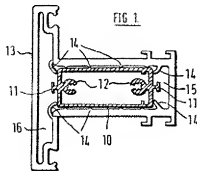
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(58) Field of search
E1J

(54) Frame members

(57) A method of manufacturing a window or door frame member comprises assembling an elongate metal element 10 within an extruded plastics element 15, e.g. of UPVC, and filling the space 15,16 between the elements with foamed plastics material so adhesively securing them together. The foamed material is preferably a polyurethane foam. The metal element may have projections 11 to improve adhesion and the plastics element may have ribs 14 to locate the metal element.



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SPECIFICATION

Window or door frame members

5 This invention relates to frame members for use in the construction of windows or doors. Frame members according to the invention, of which examples are described hereafter, may be used to form the fixed peripheral frames of windows or doors, sub-frames in which windows or doors are to be installed, the frames of pivoting or sliding window sashes or doors, or fixed windows, transoms or mullions, and structures for other like architectural purposes.

15 According to one aspect of the present invention, we provide a method of manufacturing a window or door frame member, comprising providing an elongate metal element, providing an elongate extruded plastics element, placing said metal and plastics elements in assembled relation with one another with said plastics element enclosing said metal element and a space defined between said elements, and introducing a foamed plastics material into said space to secure said metal and plastics elements together.

25 Said foamed plastics material is conveniently a polyurethane foam, which may be injected into said space in liquid form and which foams in situ completely to fill the space. There are such polyurethane foams available which adhere very well to metals and plastics, so that a secure adhesive connection is established between the metal and plastics elements of the frame member.

30 A frame member thus manufactured has the advantages that it presents good rigidity and dimensional stability when subjected to adverse conditions, e.g. low and high temperature climatic conditions, and a low thermal conductivity by virtue of the plastics element enclosing the metal element and the foamed plastics material therebetween.

35 The plastics and metal elements preferably have interengaging formations which determine the position of the metal element, as viewed in cross-section within the plastics element.

40 The metal element may have longitudinally spaced keying formations with which the foamed plastics material engages. Such keying formations may be provided by, for example, crimping the metal element at spaced intervals.

45 The metal element, which may be an extrusion of an aluminium alloy and preferably is of closed hollow section, may have an external surface which is so configured as to present and enlarged surface area for contact with the foamed plastics material. This improves adhesion between the metal element and the foamed material.

50 The invention also provides a window or door frame member made by the method of the invention.

55 The invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, of which

Figure 1 is a cross-sectional view of a frame member according to the invention,

Figure 2 is a cross sectional view of part of a window structure incorporating two further examples of frame member according to the invention.

Referring firstly to Figure 1 of the drawings, this shows a frame member which is intended to form a transom or mullion member of a window. The frame member comprises a metal element 10 which is hollow and of generally rectangular cross-section. Opposed end walls have outwardly extending T section formations 11, and inwardly extending formations 12 which in known manner are adapted to receive screws by which the frame member is secured in position in a window structure. The metal element 10 is conveniently an extrusion of an aluminium alloy.

60 The metal element 10 is disposed within an extruded element 13 of plastics material, e.g. U-PVC. The plastics element 13, is generally of T shape in cross-section, and has inwardly extending formations 14, which locate the metal element 10 within it. Two large spaces 15, 16 are defined between the metal element which, when the frame member is in use, will be on the interior and exterior sides of a building within which the window is installed.

65 The spaces 15, 16, are filled with a foamed plastics material e.g., a polyurethane foam, which is of a nature such as to adhere to the plastics and metal elements so that they are firmly secured together.

70 The frame member thus possesses good rigidity by virtue of the metal element, and good thermal insulation properties by virtue of the surrounding plastics element and filling of foamed plastics material.

75 To manufacture the frame member according to Figure 1, the metal and plastics elements 10, 13, would be extruded separately and assembled by introduction of the metal element longitudinally into the plastics element. Correct positioning of the metal element within the plastics element is ensured by virtue of formations 14 in the plastics element. Thereafter, the polyurethane foam would be introduced into spaces 15, 16, by injecting the appropriate material into the spaces in liquid form whereafter it foams in situ, completely to fill spaces 15, 16 and establish a secure adhesive connection between the metal and plastics elements. Polyurethane foams tend to adhere well to plastics such as U-PVC, and adhesion to the metal elements is improved by the presence of formations 11 thereon. In addition, the external surfaces of the metal element which are to contact the foamed material may be, for example, serrated to provide an increased surface area of contact with the foamed material.

80 Referring now to Figure 2 of the drawings, this shows in cross-section part of a window structure incorporating a fixed peripheral frame 20 and a pivotally opening sash 21. The frame member for both of these components comprises a metal element within a plastics element, and foam filled spaces, analogous to the frame member shown in Figure 1. It will be noted that the metal elements 22, 23, of the fixed frame and sash frame are identical in cross-section to one another, while the

